



Yvette Cooper MP
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Government**

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Sir David Trippier
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De Sir David

CAMBRIDGESHIRE HORIZONS - EXTERNAL REVIEW

Thank you for your letter and enclosures of 20 December 2006.

I am pleased that you and local partners have been able to put forward a package which, subject to the points below, represents a very substantial strengthening of the delivery arrangements for sustainable growth in and around Cambridge and which carries local partner support. I confirm that with resolution of the issues outstanding I would be prepared to endorse this and recognise that in the resources we can make available for successful delivery.

First, we all recognise that growth requires a long term commitment, and therefore to give the mechanism you have set out the necessary certainty, there should be a strong statutory framework for the joint planning committee, that includes all parties. You may wish to discuss the details of this further with my officials. This does not involve Government in membership appointments or any other direct sponsorship or direction of the Committee but it does give the arrangements you have set out a long term strength which will be valuable both in terms of private sector investors and the undertakings I can give you on resources and support we can make available.

Turning to the operation of the twin mechanisms you propose - a joint planning committee for the major sites - and a joint officer unit to manage delivery, these seem to me to represent a positive way forward. In developing these proposals further, we would look in particular at whether there was a clear and simple structure and unified reporting and management arrangements for the officer unit, and a robust agreement to ensure that matters of detail were appropriately delegated and that the joint committee focussed on major decisions. It should clearly be for each authority to determine the membership

appropriate for its role on the joint committee. As now we would also look for a robust business plan linking the work of both the joint committee and the officer unit to the necessary decisions for the major sites. It would be important also in terms of external benefits to achieve a streamlined "one stop" service for the whole.

On the issues of resources and subject to further discussion on the points above, you will appreciate that the next spending round is likely to be very tight with a number of competing priorities across the region. However in recognition of the importance of early sustainable growth around Cambridge and subject to resolution of the points above, I would be willing to consider a significant increase in revenue support for the strengthened delivery mechanism you have set out, and to make a start on the revolving fund concept in 2007/8 and to indicate future support in the parliamentary statement taking forward the statutory joint committee. I suggest that your team have further discussions on this with my officials - Henry Cleary in the Growth team here and Alex Plant who leads on Development and Infrastructure in GO East.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Yvette Cooper', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

YVETTE COOPER